

Crises are dangerous--for all.

Not only in Cuba 11, but in Indochina 1954, Quemoy 55, Quemoy 58: we were closer to major violence than public realized at time, and closer than enemy anticipated.

Why? And why didn't opponent anticipate? (Why hadn't we anticipated? Often: because opponent's action seemed improbable because our own response seemed "obvious" to us. Why hadn't it to opponent?)

Why is it surprising to opponent that it is dangerous to produce a humiliating surprise for us? Because they overestimate ability to produce a fait accompli; underestimate our ability to move fast and violently when motivated to do so by the conditions they have created? As if speed of victim's response, and decisiveness, were independent of the nature of the "problem" presented and the way it arose; aggressor may have extrapolated from victim's behavior in situations that threatened or reduced his national security but did not in fact create the precise sorts of pressures that the aggressor's action does (no political pressure, no deception, no public commitment. Aggressor has wrong theory.

Is key to unexpected behavior, the linkage of national and personal crisis? Ike's acceptance of responsibility for U-2?

((If Summit were to be sunk by K anyway: suppose Ike had disclaimed responsibility for U-2, as K had proposed?))

If faits accompli were tried only when they were almost sure to work, they would not be so productive of crisis, so dangerous; a good theory of the fait accompli ^{in aggressor's hands} might produce more of them, but avoid the most dangerous ones. It would also alert victim, reduce opportunities for successful ones.

Cuba and Suez: Suez was Cuba if we had waited, announced; then acted.

I come to problem as a recent Outsider; let me try to exploit that, draw that insights ~~xxx~~ that may be more readily available to one who can still remember how things looked to him as an "informed Outsider" and be self-conscious of the difference the info makes.

Educating Crisis Decision-makers

What is the "crisis decision-making community"?

It is a subset of all those concerned with national security, including all the armed forces, diplomacy, intelligence, R&D, procurement, etc. But still not a small subset.

If it includes all those who make "decisions" that (within the time-frame, let us say, of the "events leading up to the crisis"--an arbitrary cut-off, which might commence with certain enemy decisions, or certain political or technical events) that do or may significantly influence the President's choice of national policy, or the major aspects of the implementation or consequences of that choice, then the community is very large. If it includes, that is to say, all those who make deliberate choices that are effectively "decisive, ultimate, irreversible"--because of constraints of time, authority, information, or competence, or feedback loops, within the organization--that significantly affect the flow of information to the President, or the flow of ~~implementation~~ information to those who must implement the President's decision, etc., then it is very large.

~~Thatxxxxxxxincludes~~

It would then include those who influence the process of collection of ~~xx~~ data from the outside world--the priorities, means of collection schedules, constraints, transmission--and its ~~interpret~~ preliminary and intermediate processing, reporting, analysis, interpretation, before it reaches the President; and those who answer questions about status of forces, system capabilities, alternative modes of behavior and their possible consequences; and those who draw the President's attention to relevant national goals, political considerations, dangers, costs...

An even greater number of people in staffs "aid and participate" in the process, but in ways that can be monitored and modified or reversed within the time-frame of the crisis-process by superiors or colleagues or other units; but those who make genuine, irreversible choices that affect the way in which alternatives and probabilities and "positions" are presented to the President for his judgment and decision are still a very large body.

For each of these deciders, his preconceptions, model, information experience, personal goals and view of larger problems and goals, matter.

We can't investigate these for individuals (except at top); or prepared individuals optimally to meet specific future crises. But are there likely to be systematic failings ~~xx~~ that are important and remediable, that would be relevant to a range of potential situations?

~~Yxxxxxxxincludesxxxxxxx~~

Parochialism, in perspective and knowledge of current and past actions. Ignorance of true past history and knowledge of false past history (from uncensored, departmental experience supplemented by newspapers, official accounts and histories).

Do new Insiders do well enough; learn enough, fast enough? And do they avoid learning some seriously wrong lessons (as well as some right ones) from their early, isolated experiences?

2.

A combination of unlearning and education may be valuable to:

- 1) All new Insiders, including those who have broad access to current information (the Presidential Group);
- 2) Tested Insiders, whose experience is still narrow; (after 2-4 years)
- 3) Mature Insiders, whose past experience is warped by departmental boundaries. This includes nearly everybody, even with clearances.
- ((4) High-level Insiders who know what can happen and how things happen but not why they happen as they do, why patterns recur, how patterns might be changed; comparison and analysis of past experience, or criticism of their own "theories." The circle of people who share their universe of discourse is truly small, and inbred; they can learn wrong lessons not for lack of information, experience, perspective or intelligence, but just from lack of discussion and criticism. This is not, ~~xxxx~~ as perhaps in the above cases, something that can be remedied by lessons at the start of their term.))

But lessons--that are not merely more wrong, misleading lessons--can only be prepared by those who have sufficient clearance and sufficient access to interdepartmental data, studies and perspectives. and enough time to repair the critical gaps in their own experience and knowledge--which are inevitable, since there is no ~~an~~ adequate education available for this teaching job as yet (except a term or two as President, or perhaps Special Asst. for NSA).

e.g., one must be aware of the crucial role in crises of those whose job is to provide fast, precise, unequivocal, highly focussed information relevant to the urgent needs of the President, i.e., information on outside world; and role of organizations and individuals who influence that process.

Knowledge of SI alone is inadequate, even misleading; for that is (is it not?) relatively passive, uncontrolled in rate and output of useful info, involving little risk or interaction with enemy, requiring little decision-making or difficult-to-conceal activity, or occasion for "incidents" and protests; process of producing does not involve high-level decision-makers, or interact with crisis-process.

It is the "active" part of the intelligence collection process that is least appreciated by Outsider and that forms central part of crisis-process.

Here is where a New Insider could profit from knowing how problems have arisen before, how alternatives looked in past, actual consequences of choices, relevant considerations, past enemy tactics and agency biases.

The Cuban crisis left us with ambivalent attitudes towards crises and the threat of violence. At once, it reminded us of the ultimate risks that are now implicit in challenges and conflicts that can explode into nuclear war, and ~~fixate~~ it demonstrated that the threat of such a conflict, with its attendant threat of explosion, could achieve important national ends. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that if the risks of such tactics were to be tolerable at all it could only be because those risks were being controlled as wisely and effectively as possible, by those with the best information and the broadest responsibility.

Ambivalence, too, toward the notion of "management"--because of denunciations of the "management of news". Control of news was

Crisis as Communication

Reasons for Not Communicating (Privacy, Security, Discretion),
within gov, public, opponents, allies, opposing & allied public

Reasons: allies, thoughts, K; Release idea of responsibility for action
for threatening, consulting, and having to follow
line

Reflects consciousness of gov, opponents, allies as complex system

What is a Provocation: (Thompson vs. Butler-Kearns)

What events trigger recent, high-level consideration of immediate commitment
to unilateral action
on crisis

Crisis as Failure (on both sides): Reasons not to plan, prepare...

Crisis as Surprise (sequence of, on both sides: Provocations)

Adversary communications: with multiple audiences, need to plan
Crisis as Communication: How common factor, that my prediction of my behavior
better than yours: that I am likely to

Crisis as Unilateral Actions
Summitry

take unilateral limited actions, that I might
take some unilateral actions?

Crisis takes place

at high noon - with the citizens
watching behind their shutters

Crisis as Negotiating

Possible patterns:

1. For preparatory opponents' actions to lead to exaggerated reports of specific, observable activity that will be disproved by photos, with the effects that: a) these reports are discredited and essentially ignored, alternative explanations not being adequately explored ("Where there's no fire, after all, there's no real smoke.") b) Later, correct reports of similar appearance are regarded as implausible.

Basis for the early exaggeration: sources may report inferences, predictions, rumors, as concrete, observed activities, in specific locations.

Questions:

1. Under what circumstances would X not have been a "crisis"? What would have prevented it from arising at all?

Under what circumstances does it make sense to talk of a "quiet" crisis or a "prolonged crisis"? When the possibility of military action looms for a long time? (Komer: India-Pakistan as a quiet crisis).

2. In retrospect, how might actual crises have been much worse? What could have gone wrong? What would have horribly confused things--say, given current interpretations of the situation? How could Soviets have done much better?

3. What are ways of scoring US crisis performance? What ways are actually used? i.e., what are individuals' criteria of success or failure? What are differences among these; how do differences affect behavior? What is seen at time as possible losses or benefits; what later?

4. Following (2) above: Could actual crises be points of departure, starting-point scenarios, for modified scenarios of "might-have-been" crises. Take situation as it existed--and agency positions, expectations, differences of opinion, objectives, as they actually were, in full richness of detail and background--and ask the people who actually participated how situation might have been affected by certain modifications or developments,

((Analogy: the seminar phase of a two-sided wargame: talking through alternative courses) (Check with ~~xxx~~ Weiner, de Weerd)

5. Is it an objective to eliminate crises? Or are crises (including non-military crises) equivalent to high-level decision points? i.e., are they simply what a decision point, a choice, a commitment, looks like at high level? (No: there are many decision points that do not feel like a crisis, nor do they call for military action). Are

ARE THERE FUNCTIONS OF CRISIS? Suppose there were no experiences like crises; would some goals be harder to achieve, would some problems become harder?

Compare a fire station, a hospital emergency clinic, a police desk: the latter, particularly, ~~xx~~ exists precisely to deal with the need for imminent use of force: are these calls to function experienced as crises? How much planning is there; how much reliance on SOP, checklists?

6. HOW MUCH CONTINGENCY PLANNING IS DONE WITHIN GOVERNMENT, RELATED TO SECURITY AND CRISES? BY AGENCIES? How much use of checklists, SOPs, distribution lists? Are there parallels to Emergency Action Files in State, CIA, White House? Are these preparations coordinated, known to each other? How do they mesh? ARE THEY USED IN CRISIS?

(Task for Bennington)

Questions and tasks

7. Analyze ~~Dimensions~~ Dimensions of Surprise.

(e.g.: Was precipitating event anticipated: in planning, in intelligence estimates, by individuals at different levels, by Pres; as possibility, as past experience, as probable. If not, various sorts of reasons why not. Were preparations made: for better short-run anticipation (alarm), for response? What sort; by whom; with what effectiveness?

8. Investigate Alerting procedures: in different agencies, at different levels and components of given agency. What are plans; are they coordinated? Jointly exercised? Are they actually used; what is history of this? If not, why not? How modified in actual use? Why/when would they not be used?

What do different agencies know of each other's alerting procedures, plans? What do we know of Allies'? Of Soviet Union's? China? Russia?

What do they know of ours?

What have reactions actually been in past to alerting measures?

How have alerts actually been executed in past? How much is known of this at time to high-level commanders? How much has this been studied? How do exercise results correlate with actual practice? How do both correlate to plans?

What interagency, inter-Allied problems have arisen in alerts?

How well are various alerting procedures coordinated to warning procedures?

What messages do various alerts convey? How much noise? What do we know of enemy, Allied, public interpretation? How does lack of coordination affect this?

9. Evaluate past crises, in terms of what losses were risked, experienced, avoided; what benefits.

Examine, with retrospective data, how courses of action actually proposed but not adopted might have worked out (e.g., total blockade of Cuba;

10. Compile list of standard action proposals in crises; examine what evidence can be brought to bear upon their effectiveness: e.g., evidence as to their effect if they had been used; evidence as to their effect when actually used in past. How much has this been studied?

e.g.: blockade

boycott

declarations of various kinds (including Congressional, public)

demonstrations of various kinds

harassing, spoofing

sabotage; covert action

assassination

mobilizations

11. What do top people see as "rules of the game"? in various areas. How do these differ from explicit, admitted rules; those known to publics? What sorts of actions are perceived as violations of the rules? What are emotional and behavior reactions to such breaks?

Anticipation of Crises

"Hard" evidence amounts to highly unequivocal evidence that, say, missiles are already in place.

No evidence that missiles will be emplaced could be considered "hard," I take it--except perhaps preparatory activities already taking place that could only be associated with missiles and that would not be undertaken unless emplacement was regarded as virtually certain. (a "hard" decision, or commitment).

To what extent were expectations of missiles held low until "hard" evidence--i.e., until evidence had been received that missiles were actually there?

How important was the belief that there would be adequate time for response after missiles were first discovered--that missiles would take a long time to prepare? Did this lead to false confidence that a negative finding would not be invalidated for a considerable time?

Were many SA-2 missiles wrongly estimated in terms of size, as MRBMs? What difference in reporting is now discernible between those who were describing SAMs and those who were reporting MRBMs?

What were characteristics of reports after mid-Sept that made them more convincing?

What is basis for conviction that all missiles were removed from Cuba? (Note absence of a correspondance between missiles previously observed and those taken out: proof that it is possible to conceal missiles from our observation or reporting). (Note also: not enough missiles removed for reload--48--and spares, nor IRBMs). (also: agent reports). (continued presence of combat troops).

Stennis ~~Subcomm~~ Subcomm:

- revised Oct 27*
- a) Not until after a confirming picture obtained on Oct 25 did int. comm. identify presence of SU organized ground combat forces (low-level photo, combined with reanalysis of previous photos)
 - b). On Oct. 22, int comm estimated SU personnel in Cuba at 8000-10,000. Now believed at least 22000.. (earlier passenger ships ~~xxx~~ troop-loaded; and arrivals in cargo ships). (even 22000 may not account for all equipment).
 - c) Since Pres. didn't know of combat units on Oct. 22, he couldn't include them in demands for withdrawal.

(Was it considered adding these to list?)

- d) Not until photo on Oct. 14 that int. comm concluded missiles had been introduced.

(Conclusion reached near end of Sept. that there was a suspect MRBM site in Pinar del Rio province; photos proposed; Oct 14.

Sept. 28: photos taken, evaluated on Oct. 9 ?) as IL-28's.

No evidence of photo gap. Flights: Aug 29; Sept 5; planned for Sept 10 but cancelled (?); Sept. 17 (cloud cover); Sept 26, 29, Oct 5, Oct 7; these flights completed coverage of those areas of Cuba which had been spotlighted as requiring early attention (but: no exploring; no recoveage of earlier areas; skirting of SAMs; and good weather requirements?)

SAC given responsibility on Oct 12 (since SAMs to be overflown).

No evidence of SAC-CIA fight. SAC flew 17 high altitude sorties between 14-22 Oct.

PRESTIGE ISSUES

1. Exchanges on issues of telling US how many Sov troops were being removed from Cuba, Jan--June 1963
2. Interpretation of Missile Crisis as a deliberate attack on administration; effect of Pres of having warnings ignored, predictions falsified. (JFK, Mikoyan)
3. Interpretation of SAMs, buildup, as a personal affront to Pres. (Sorenson-Dob).
4. Dob-Rusk: feeling in Moscow that US didn't pay enough attention to Sov prestige.
5. K to de Gaulle, Macmillan, on Oct 15, 1960; re Eisenhower behavior in U-2 shootdown.
6. SUEZ: a) interpretation of Nasser's "blackmail" by Dulles; b) Nasser reaction to rejection; c) Eden reaction to Nasser action; d) English-French need to punish, humiliate Nasser; e) English-French reaction to Dulles' "deception"; f) Eisenhower-Dulles reaction to English-French deception, defiance, "aggression", and timing before election;
7. Bay of Pigs; a) role of earlier campaign statements; b) Stevenson reaction to deception, lies? c) Adenauer concern for US prestige.

or indirect, to the Soviet bloc that are feared. The basic threat may be that the public, armed with this information, would demand action, or an ally would demand inaction, which the responsible decisionmakers thought inappropriate. *It may come from the opponents' position, that the decision must be left, but they, the other leaders' hands; the necessary may have been degraded.*

But what of the consequences? By doing without staffs and complex interchanges among departments, by contracting a ring of participants in the policy process to those at the very apex of the pyramid of power, one obviously risks the loss of all those benefits for which the edifice of government and bureaucracy exist. The chances are ^{presumably} obviously increased of commitment to policies that are infeasible, unwieldy, excessively costly or risky, or grossly inefficient, *The chances that new policies, satisfying more fully than the old a multitude of objections and constraints, will be inessential, deadweight, & adversarial, are presumably decreased.* (If this were not the case, then Washington could be emptied of bureaucrats to an extent that might astound even a radical foe of Big Government. This is not to say that a less adequate, imaginative, or efficient policy will inevitably emerge from decisionmaking by a committee of principals than from normal bureaucratic procedure; it is a presumption about average results and risks.) A less obvious risk, suggested to me by Chet Cooper (CIA) is that decisionmakers who exploit the opportunity, or are forced by events, to become "their own desk officers," "their own estimators and planners," may become committed, officially and emotionally, to particular estimates, proposals, and considerations in a manner common to their subordinates, losing the detachment and breadth of perspective which they alone are normally in a position to bring to the policy process.

A little-noted but potent consequence of the freezing out of staffs from the policy process may be that opinions, judgments, considerations

and goals which the principals have heretofore concealed from their own staffs, for one or another reason, and which have therefore had little influence on the earlier planning process or even upon the overt policies of the Government, now become suddenly effective when the principals are "forced" to arrive at decisions in seclusion from influence ("interference") from their staffs. When the principals share, to a large degree, these concealed attitudes, and when the staffs or governmental organs that were earlier influential but are now excluded from decisionmaking share, for their part, a divergent set of values, preconceptions, or objectives, the result ^{of internal security} can be sharp shifts in policy from earlier planning, declarations, or non-crisis actions. ^{but the same is true of external security and the time may be somewhat less at Nassau} This result is paradoxical from the perspective of a simple view of government in which one abstracts from the problems of internal dissent, of ~~complex~~ complex structure, of limitations on control, ^{of "captivity to staffs,"} and from the variety of reasons that the President or a departmental head may sign letters, approve plans, issue declarations, make speeches, and order programs, ^{all} prepared for him by subordinates, for some considerable period, despite the fact that he is personally uneasy with or even consciously disapproving of the policies reflected in these instruments. We lack, on the whole, adequate theories of complex organizational behavior that would lead us to predict such phenomena. Nevertheless, this sharp and abrupt turning point ~~complex~~ (one of the dictionary definitions of "crisis") as principals are released from staff anchors was strikingly evident in Nassau in 1962; moreover, slight changes in circumstances during the Cuban missile crisis might as well have resulted in Ex Comm decisions that would have amazed and dismayed intimate staff assistants, as well as observers less close.

The crisis as dialog

The crisis as summit

The crisis as national security (Steffens, etc. and).

The crisis as sublime

The crisis as failure

The crisis as test of the President

Pres. prestige as stake (Munich etc.)

Dialog — communication sets target or expectation

Summit — attitudes of head of state

National security — 1) to coordinate, to control messages

to convey, form expectations, to avoid

unwanted interpretations, speculation, distortion

(and to maintain secrecy, produce

fact sample)

2) to ^{lead} control of policy, avoid generally

actions by 1) appoint, 2) advise, 3) encourage, 4) resist

5) Must confront fairly, unambiguously

failure

Challenges of "social-technical" (intelligent?) behavior; can cope with
situations not envisaged by designer

[Study on essential for a crisis / TV news alerting
and response system

Robt. gives incentives for ^{evolving} disrupting i.e. surprises from
unready system: must be able to recover from surprise. When left
in a crisis (order may of the inhibitions & adaptive activity is
reduced — to return soon after crisis)

Costs of Peacetime Planning for Crisis and Wars

(Effects of peacetime goals & pressures & perspectives on
plans & preparations and on actual operations in crisis)

Note fear of lessening our ability to muddle through, to
improvise to meet short-run problems, by preparations for
long run. What are potential conflicts here?
What are the "requirements for muddling through"?